

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BRASILIA 4061

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BR, PO, XA

SUBJECT: OAU REQUEST FOR BRAZILIAN PRESSURE ON PORTUGAL:
BRAZIL AS MEDIATOR?

SUMMARY: BRAZILIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUED PRESS RELEASE ON JUNE 4 CONCERNING REQUEST FROM OAU THAT BRAZIL EXERT INFLUENCE ON PORTUGAL FOR RECOGNITION OF "REPUBLIC OF GUINEA BISSAU" AND FOR INDEPENDENCE OF ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE, INDICATING THAT SUBSTANCE OF REQUEST WAS PASSED ON TO PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES. WHILE FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES AVOID USE OF TERM "MEDIATION" IN CONNECTION WITH BRAZILIAN ACTION, INDICATIONS ARE THAT BRAZIL PREPARED UNDERTAKE SOME ROLE IN DETERMINING FUTURE STATUS OF PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES IF SO REQUESTED BY PORTUGAL. MEMBER OF PORTUGUESE JUNTA GEN. GALVAO DE MELO IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN BRAZIL JUNE 8. END SUMMARY.

1. NEWSPAPERS OF JUNE 5 GAVE PROMINENT PLAY TO FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESS RELEASE BEARING ON QUESTION OF PORTUGUESE AFRICA, AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE LAST FRIDAY, MAY 31, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY RECEIVED A COMMUNICATION IN WHICH THE
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ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY REQUESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT

OF BRAZIL, AS A FRIEND OF PORTUGAL, EXERT ITS INFLUENCE WITH THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT IN FAVOR OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA AND THE RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA BISSAU. IN COMPLIANCE WITH THIS REQUEST, THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT HAS INFORMED THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT OF THE TEXT OF THE COMMUNICATION UNDER REFERENCE THROUGH ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. UNQUOTE

2. NEWSPAPERS INTERPRETED FOREIGN MINISTRY ACTION AS OFFER OF MEDIATION, ALTHOUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHIEF OF CABINET, MINISTER SOUTO MAIOR SPECIFICALLY DENIED TO AN EMBOFF THAT MEDIATION WAS INVOLVED. ONE ARTICLE WHICH HAS AN AUTHORITATIVE RING, STATED, HOWEVER, THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS ONLY AWAITING AN AFFIRMATIVE PORTUGUESE RESPONSE TO ASSUME A MEDIATING ROLE. THE NATURE OF THAT ROLE IS UNDEFINED, IN THE PRESS, BUT ONE IDEA PUT FORWARD IS THE USE OF BRASILIA AS THE SITE FOR NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE PORTUGUESE, AND, PRESUMABLY, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. CHIEF OF FOREIGN MINISTRY AFRICA DIVISION, FERREIRA LOPES, IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF JUNE 5, SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS "WAITING QUIETLY" FOR DEVELOPMENTS. UNDER PRODDING, LOPES SAID THAT BRAZIL WAS NOT SEEKING ROLE OF MEDIATOR, BUT FELT A "DUTY" TO BOTH AFRICANS AND PORTUGUESE TO ASSIST IN NEGOTIATIONS IF ASKED TO DO SO. JORNALS OF JUNE 6 HEADLINED ANNOUNCEMENT THAT PORTUGUESE JUNTA MEMBER GENERAL CARLOS GALVAO DE MELO WOULD VISIT BRAZIL ON JUNE 8 IN CONNECTION WITH THE CELEBRATION OF THE PORTUGUESE NATIONAL DAY ON JUNE 10, NOTED THAT THIS REPRESENTED A WARMING OF PORTUGUESE-BRAZILAIN RELATIONS, AND SPECULATED THAT MELO WOULD BRING A RESPONSE TO THE BRAZILIAN MESSAGE. WE NOTE THAT THE NEWSPAPER COVERAGE CAST THE MELO VISIT AS A PORTUGUESE INITIATIVE, AND NOT AS A RESPONSE TO A BRAZILIAN INVITATION AS INDICATED IN LISBON'S 2310.

3. COMMENT: VARIOUS REASONS ARE PUT FORWARD BY OBSERVERS FOR THE RELEASE OF THE STATEMENT AND ITS TIMING: (A) THAT THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN BRAZIL AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES ON THE QUESTION OF THE PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES, INTERRUPTED BY THE PORTUGUESE COUP, HAD BEEN REJOINED BY THE OAU REQUEST AND

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THAT BRAZIL WISHED TO SHOW PUBLICLY AND IMMEDIATELY ITS WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE; (B) THAT A SCENARIO ARRANGED AMONG THE PARTIES CALLED FOR THE BRAZILIAN ANNOUNCEMENT, WHICH WAS RELEASED ACCORDING TO AGREED TIMING; AND (C) THAT THE OFFER OF "GOOD OFFICES" BY FRANCE PRECIPITATED THE BRAZILIAN ANNOUNCEMENT IN ORDER TO FORESTALL FRENCH INVOLVEMENT AND ESTABLISH THEIR OWN PRIMACY IN THE QUESTION OF THE PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES. WE ARE INCLINED TOWARD

VERSION (C). ONE NEWS STORY NOTED THAT, EVEN BEFORE THE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT WAS RELEASED, OFFICIALS HAD DENIGRATED THE FRENCH OFFER IN COMPARISON TO THE DIRECT ROLE BRAZIL MIGHT PLAY IN NEGOTIATIONS AMONG THE PARTIES. EMBOFF WAS REPEATEDLY ASKED BY LOPES, "WHAT IS KISSINGER UP TO IN LISBON?", REFERRING, NOT TO THE PERSONAL PRESENCE OF THE SECRETARY THERE, BUT TO WHAT EMBOFF UNDERSTOOD TO BE LOPES' APPREHENSION THAT A U.S. INITIATIVE WITH THE PORTUGUESE MIGHT BE UNDERWAY.

4. WHATEVER THE UNDERLYING CAUSE, THE PUBLIC STATEMENT BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, WIDESPREAD PRESS SPECULATION BASED ON INFORMATION FROM OFFICIAL SOURCES ABOUT A BRAZILIAN MEDIATING ROLE, AND LOPES' STATEMENT THAT BRAZIL HAS A "DUTY" TO FULFILL, ALL POINT TO BRAZILIAN EAGERNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN SOME MANNER IN THE RESOLUTION OF PORTUGAL'S AFRICAN PROBLEMS, OR, AT LEAST, MAKE A VERY PUBLIC SHOW OF ITS READINESS TO DO SO. GIVEN FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA'S PRIOR ASSERTION THAT BRAZIL WOULD ONLY BECOME INVOLVED IF SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED TO DO SO BY BOTH SIDES, IT WOULD SEEM THAT BRAZILIAN FEARS OF BEING SUPERSEDED BY FRANCE AND BRAZILIAN EAGERNESS TO GAIN FAVOR WITH BLACK AFRICA HAVE OVERCOME THE PASSIVE ATTITUDE INDICATED BY SILVEIRA.

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5. PRIVATE ASSERTIONS BY FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS THAT BRAZIL DOES NOT SEEK A MEDIATING ROLE ARE IN LINE WITH THE TEXT OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT, WHICH LIMITS THE OAU REQUEST TO ONE OF "EXERTING/BRAZILIAN/ INFLUENCE" ON PORTUGAL, BUT DO NOT ACCOUNT FOR THE OFFICIALLY-INSPIRED PRESS COVERAGE WHICH POINTS UP A BRAZILIAN ROLE AS "MEDIATOR." OUR ESTIMATE IS THAT BRAZIL HAS SEIZED UPON THE OAU REQUEST AS A LOW-COST MEANS OF INJECTING ITSELF DIRECTLY INTO THE QUESTION OF THE FUTURE OF THE AFRICAN TERRITORIES. IF PORTUGLA ACCEPTS SOME BRAZILIAN ROLE IN SETTLEMENT OF THE FUTURE OF THE TERRITORIES, THIS WOULD FIT BRAZILIAN DESIRES FOR AN INCREASED WORLD ROLE IN A MANNER THAT WOULD APPEAL DIRECTLY TO THE LDC'S AND PARTICULARLY TO THE AFRO-ARAB BLOC. MORE TO THE POINT, BRAZIL HAS, BY PUBLICATION OF THE OAU REQUEST FOR PRESSURE ON PORTUGAL TO EXTEND INDEPENDENCE TO ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE AND GUINEA-BISSAU, EFFECTIVELY PUT ITSELF ON THE SIDE OF THE AFRICANS WHETHER OR NOT PORTUGAL ACCEDES TO A BRAZILIAN ROLE. CRIMMINS

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